



# LIVE YOUR FREEDOMS

## First Amendment Museum Fountain Request for Proposal



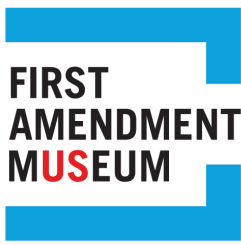
### OVERVIEW

The First Amendment Museum requests a proposal to (1) design, create and install an outdoor fountain, and (2) to advise on its surrounding landscape, on the grounds of the First Amendment Museum in the Capitol Historic District of Augusta, Maine. A selection committee will consider the proposals and select an artist to complete the work that most clearly aligns with the background information provided below.

The total project budget is envisioned around \$75,000, but all reasonable proposals will be considered. The submission deadline is September 1, 2021, with an estimated installation of summer/fall 2023.

### BACKGROUND

The First Amendment Museum (FAM) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit museum located in the historic home of Guy P. Gannett, one of Maine's most celebrated publishers and free press champions. Located at 184 State Street and anchoring the northern entrance to Augusta's Capitol Historic District, the 1911



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Mediterranean Revival home is an architectural gem in Kennebec County and has been on the National Register of Historic Places since 1983. FAM was formed in 2015 with the intention of turning the Gannett House into a museum to help people understand — and inspire people to live — their five First Amendment freedoms - the freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom to assemble, and freedom to petition.

FAM believes that the freedoms protected by the First Amendment are the cornerstone of a strong and vibrant democracy. We want Americans to live their five First Amendment freedoms, so we emphasize experiential learning in our exhibits and programming. We envision a nation of individuals who are informed, active, and engaged in their commitment to upholding the freedoms protected by the First Amendment.

The spring of 2022 will mark the beginning of a multi-year effort to transform the historic Gannett House into a major destination. The project will include significant restoration work on the historic house and garage, as well as construction of a 5,000 square foot modern addition to the home, new permanent exhibitions throughout the house, and sitework that will transform the property into a park-like setting. The Museum's leadership and Board has developed these plans with a team of consultants including architects, engineers, landscape designers, historic preservationists, museum education consultants, and exhibition designers.

The fountain will play a key role in the landscape design, being the preeminent fixture of the south lawn between the museum and the Blaine House, Maine's Governor's residence. Landscape design of the area surrounding the fountain will be done in consultation with the artist.

We anticipate the fountain area to be a reflective space, where visitors can take a moment to themselves to process what they've experienced during their visit.

The fountain will be the focus of the view from the newly restored sunroom on the south side of the house which is likely to house an exhibit focused on religious liberty, as well as from numerous other second-story windows in both the museum and the Blaine House. Visitors will be able to access the fountain directly from the sunroom, as well as from numerous directions outside.

In its original 1911 form, the fountain was a tall (7-8 feet high) classical-revival piece incorporating a 6 feet wide round cement basin at ground level, inside of which sat a column capped by a decorative basin, the basin surmounted by a seated cherub from which the water flowed.



The fountain is considered a centerpiece of the property's original landscape design. As an historic property which is subject to the Secretary of Interior's Standards due to an easement on the property, the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC), will review the fountain design and will need to give final approval to any design. The artist and project design team will need to collectively work with MHPC to obtain their approval for this feature's design. This is likely to require meetings, correspondence, and may also require modifications to the artist's concept. MHPC has determined that a new fountain design that is in scale with the historic centerpiece and compatible with the overall Gannett House property would be in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Today, the original cement basin is still in place and MHPC has requested it be incorporated into the new fountain's design, or if it is found to be beyond repair, it is to be replicated in materials, detailing, and dimensions.



While it is not intended to be an interpretive element with incorporated text or images, if the fountain reflected the museum's mission in some way, it would be a plus. The fountain's design, function, and maintenance should take Maine's weather into consideration, as well as the museum's visitation. ADA access to the fountain is required, and newly installed underground running water and power will be available at the site.

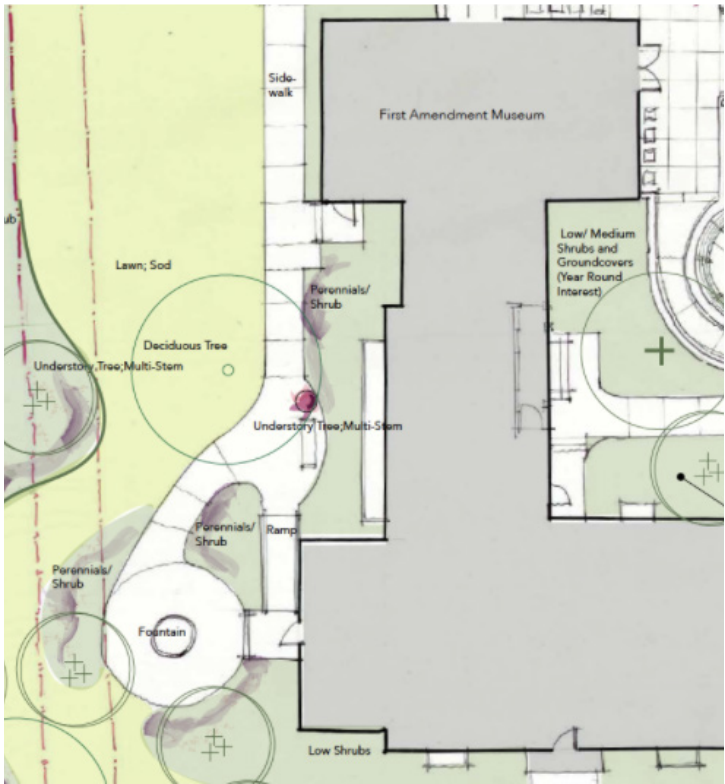
The artist will work in conjunction with the Museum's design team for design and selection of surrounding plantings (if any are desired other than sod) and for selection and detailing of walkways leading to the fountain. Drawings for the project site and building are available to the artist for reference.



*Above: Sketch from landscape designer to show the location of the fountain next to the sunroom access point  
Below: Architectural rendering of the entire sitework, including the site of the fountain (blue circle)*







*Overview of the future FAM building, with the fountain in the southeast of the lawn*

*The original base of the fountain, looking southwest to the Capitol dome - the Blaine House is directly behind the overgrown arbor vitae, which we expect will be replaced by a new privacy fence and plantings soon.*



*2018 overhead view of the building and yard, including the fountain base*

## **PROJECT BUDGET:**

There is approximately \$75,000 available for this project. These funds will be used to commission work from a single artist. An artist budget proposal must cover all design, fabrication, transportation, documentation, and installation expenses, including any utility or site modifications associated with the artwork. The cost of the fountain itself is included in this budget.

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

The First Amendment Museum selection committee of five members will jury submissions for the project. Artists selected to make a proposal will receive a \$750.00 design fee for their effort. Proposals are due on September 1, 2021 and will be presented to the committee in person (COVID-allowing). Submitted materials will not be returned.

## **SELECTION CRITERIA:**

- Artistic strength as shown through vision, originality, and understanding of craft (30 points).
- Ability to translate artistic concepts into work that will activate or enhance the proposed space (25 points).
- Application is comprehensive in information and ideas are well communicated (20 points).
- Ability to design work that is sensitive to the social, environmental, historical, and/or other relevant contexts (15 points).
- Proposed artwork meets the goals set out in the RFP (10 points).

## **DEADLINE**

September 1, 2021 at 11:59 PM is the deadline for submission of materials. Materials received after this date may be excluded from consideration.

## **MATERIALS REQUIRED IN INITIAL SUBMISSION**

Physical materials should be delivered to the museum at 184 State St in Augusta. Digital assets can be sent to [dwilliams@firstamendmentmuseum.org](mailto:dwilliams@firstamendmentmuseum.org)

Your proposal must include:

1. A written proposal (hard copy delivered & PDF emailed) describing how you will address the fountain and its design requirements. In addition, please detail anticipated future maintenance requirements. Explain in detail your concept and approach to the fountain and the site immediately surrounding the fountain. Please be as specific as possible, including what you perceive the immediate physical surroundings of the fountain being.
2. An itemized budget estimate (delivered and emailed) to give cost expectations.
3. Detailed models, drawings, renderings, samples of work and/or material samples sufficient to clarify your ideas. (as much as possible to be emailed, but we will expect some physical examples)

## **PRESENTATION**

Artists will present to the selection committee in person (COVID permitting) during the week of September 5th - 11th.